may be traced through either parent, and almost anyone, if genealogies were regularly kept by the commoners, could find some relative from whom the title might be claimed. The only sayyid in Rowanduz who made use of the green turban was a poor and elderly blacksmith, something of an extrovert, who also wore a beard to increase his appearance of saintliness. The chieftains, many of whom have the title, usually avoid these appearances, such as Sayyid Ahmad of Betas who dressed in the same fashion as the other aristocrats. Whether these pedigrees are genuine or bogus is impossible to say, for the Arab penetration of Kurdistan has gone on for many centuries, but one may suspect that, insofar as the title accords a little social distinction, many of these claims, at some point, are as valid as those of some pretentious Englishman who finds ancestors for himself who landed with the Conqueror or an American who discovers forebears on the Mayflower.

The religious phraseology of the townspeople is in the Arabic language. All of their prayers, pious utterances, and, indeed, their expletives are in Arabic, while everyday speech is Kurdish. Prayer will be dealt with below. The most common expletive, heard constantly in the conversation of the day, is simply Wllah, "God." It can be used in a variety of contexts, some of them pious and many quite otherwise. The tired merchant stretching himself on his cushions or bed may utter a long-drawn out Wllah, and the same is applied to a welcome glass of tea, a lovely woman, or the like. It should not be supposed, of course,

5: Edmonds G-5 (1923, 1945) 1957 MA11 Kurd MA11

the idealistic spirit of the time, was at first to avoid commitments in the hills by setting up one or more semi-autonomous Kurdish provinces to be loosely attached to whatever regular administration might eventually be established in the plains. Even before the armistice contract had been established with a certain Shaykh Mahmud, head of the leading Sayyid family of Southern Kurdistan, who was informed that any Kurdish groups or tribes in the three *liwas* of Sulaimani, Kirkuk and Arbil which might wish to accept his leadership would be allowed to do so. It soon became evident, however, that the Sayyid had overestimated his popularity, and his province was eventually restricted to little more than the *liwa* of Sulaimani. No similar initiative was taken in regard to the Kurdish districts in the *liwa* of Mosul, where there was no articulate Kurdish opinion.

[illegible] was not a success. Within six months the Shaykh, resenting the limitations placed on his freedom to do exactly as he liked, rebelled. After a short military operation he was captured and deported, and the *liwa* was brought under the direct administration of the Occupation Authority. But quite apart from Shaykh Mahmud's personal ambitions there was always present at Sulaimani, among all classes of the population, an abiding conviction, rooted in their history, that the place contained the germs of a revived and extensive Kurdish state of which it was the predestined capital. The belief had little justification either in its physical appearance and commercial importance or in the academic attainments and political experience of its citizens, but it was always in the air. The proposal that Sulaimani with the adjacent districts should once more become an autonomous territory, therefore, had not come to the people as anything strange.

For the other political leaders the fall of Mahmud was thus no reason for renouncing the glittering prize brought so near by the Treaty of Sèvres. Assurances had been given in the British Parliament that the Kurds would not be forced to come under an Arab government against their will, and when the Provisional National Government of Iraq was formed in November, 1920, Sulaimani remained under the direct control of the British High Commissioner. Kirkuk (which then included Arbil) did accept a *Mutasarrif* (Governor) nominated by the new government, but he, like all the other officials, was a local man, and Turkish, the language of the educated urban classes (but not of the majority of the inhabitants), continued to be used for official purposes. When in June, 1921, the Amir Faysal arrived in Iraq as the candidate sponsored by the British Government for the throne Sulaimani refused to participate in the referendum; Kirkuk did participate but accounted for most of the

S: Edmonds G-S (1923, 1948) 1957 MA11 Kurd MA11

even tribesmen armed only with rifles and limited supplies of ammunition, and, with the advent of aircraft and new types of mechanical transport suitable for rough country, even their former advantage of superior mobility has passed to the forces of law and order. In any case, those of the old enemy patrols who are still alive have been softened by a growing dependence on the amenities of the towns and on modern luxuries brought within reach by improved communications, while their sons, most of whom have been educated in government schools, are tending to become dependent, like the rest of the new middle class, on regular employment in the army, the civil service, or the professions. Nationalistic agitation might perhaps seek to profit from any agrarian unrest, but apart from this it is likely to express itself in little more than the occasional [illegible] or occasional localized riots by students and bazaar loafers.

Whatever the mistakes and shortcomings of the past, Iraq is the one country where the existence of the Kurds as such has come to be officially recognized. In Sulaimani and Arbil especially not only is Kurdish the official language but the whole atmosphere of the administration is Kurdish. The sense of being at the mercy of an uncomprehending bureaucracy in a distant capital has been mitigated by a recent measure of devolution applying to the whole country, the Provincial Administration Law, whereby funds are placed at the disposal of, or may be raised by, the local authorities to be spent in accordance with policies locally determined. In spite of earlier handicaps Kurds have risen to the highest offices. One of the intellectuals imprisoned in 1931 has since held the portfolio of Education, and all the necessary books for the primary classes are now available in good, idiomatic Kurdish. A son of Shaykh Mahmud and one of the Shaykh's principal lieutenants, an officer of great ability, have been Ministers of Social Affairs in different Cabinets. For two or three years past the Minister of the Interior (a key office, second only to that of Prime Minister) and the *Mutasarrif* of Mosul (the senior provincial governorship) have been Kurds born and bred in Sulaimani. Fair numbers of students are now being sent to Europe and America. If there was ever any justification for the old fear that the Kurds of Iraq would look north or east for their salvation, there can be very little in it now. The present Prime Minister, General Nuri al-Sa'id, has a comprehending and liberal approach to the Kurdish question. It is still too early to say that all the old wounds have been healed, but there seems to be a new spirit abroad that augurs well for the future.